AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for the automatic configuration of a bi-directional Internet Protocol (IP) communication device, comprising:

broadcasting a request for basic configuration details for the IP communication device. where said request contains a unique bi-directional IP communication device identifier associated with a unique user;

receiving said basic configuration details from a server, where said basic configuration details are assigned to said unique user based on said unique bi-directional IP communication device identifier; and

configuring said bi-directional IP communication device with said basic configuration details.

2. (Original)The method of claim 1, wherein said broadcasting further comprises broadcasting said request for basic configuration details, including an IP address, to a Dynamic Host Configuration Protocol (DHCP) server, where said bi-directional IP communication device is a Digital Subscriber Line (DSL) gateway.

3. (Original)The method of claim 2, wherein said receiving comprises obtaining an IP address from said DHCP server.

4. (Original)The method of claim 1, further comprising transmitting a configuration request for additional configuration details.

5. (Original)The method of claim 4, further comprising receiving said additional configuration details specific to said unique user.

6. (Original)The method of claim 5, further comprising configuring said bi-directional IP communication device with said additional configuration details.

7. (Original)The method of claim 1, further comprising, before said broadcasting step, the steps of:

connecting said bi-directional IP communication device to an analog telephone line; and

powering said bi-directional IP communication device on.

8. (Original)The method of claim 1, further comprising, before said broadcasting step. the step of automatically detecting a DSL communication circuit.

9. (Original)The method of claim 1, further comprising, before said broadcasting step, the step of automatically determining Permanent Virtual Circuit (PVC) details for communications between said bi-directional IP communication device and a communications network.

10. (Original)The method of claim 9, wherein said determining comprises the step of ascertaining a VPINCI (Virtual Path Identifier/Virtual Channel Identifier) pair for said communications.

11. (Original)The method of claim 1, wherein said broadcasting comprises broadcasting a DHCP Discover request.

12. (Original)The method of claim 1, wherein said receiving comprises acquiring a DHCP Offer message from a DHCP server.

13. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising, prior to said configuring step, the steps of:

sending a DHCP Request message to ~~said~~ a DHCP server; and

receiving a DHCP acknowledge message from said DHCP server.

14. (Original)The method of claim 1, wherein said broadcasting and receiving steps occur automatically without any communication between said bi-directional IP communication device and a client computer coupled to said bi-directional IP communication device.

15. (Original)The method of claim 1, further comprising, prior to said configuring step, the steps of:

assigning said unique bi-directional IP communication device identifier to said bi-directional IP communication device; and

associating said unique bi-directional IP communication device identifier with said unique user.

16. (Original)The method of claim 15, further comprising generating a configuration table listing bi-directional-IP communication device identifiers and associated users.

17. (Currently Amended)A bi-directional IP communication device, comprising:

a Central Processing Unit (CPU);

communication circuitry;

input/output ports; and

a memory containing:

a unique bi-directional IP communication device identifier;

instructions for broadcasting a request for basic configuration details for the IP communication device, where said request contains a unique bi-directional IP communication device identifier associated with a unique user;

instructions for receiving said basic configuration details from a server, where said basic configuration details is assigned to said unique user based on said unique bi-directional IP

communication device identifier; and

instructions for configuring said bi-directional IP communication device with said basic configuration details.

18. (Original)The bi-directional IP communication device of claim 17, wherein said instructions for broadcasting further comprise instructions for broadcasting said request for basic configuration details, including an IP address, to a Dynamic Host Configuration Protocol (DHCP) server, where said bi-directional IP communication device is a Digital Subscriber Line (DSL) gateway.

19. (Currently Amended)A computer program product for use in conjunction with a computer system for the automatic configuration of a bi-directional Internet Protocol (IP) communication device, the computer program product comprising a computer readable storage and a computer program stored therein, the computer program comprising:

instructions for broadcasting a request for basic configuration details for the IP communication device, where said request contains a unique bi-directional IP communication device identifier associated with a unique user;

instructions for receiving said basic configuration details from a server, where said basic configuration details is assigned to said unique user based on said unique bi-directional IP communication device identifier; and

instructions for configuring said bi-directional IP communication device with said basic configuration details.

20. (Original)The computer program product of claim 19, wherein said instructions for broadcasting further comprise instructions for broadcasting said request for basic configuration details, including an IP address, to a Dynamic Host Configuration Protocol (DHCP) server, where said bi-directional IP communication device is a Digital Subscriber Line (DSL) gateway.

21. (New) The method of claim 11, wherein a configuration table listing device identifiers, their associated users, and each user's basic configuration details is stored in the server.

22. (New) A method for the automatic configuration of a bi-directional Internet Protocol (IP) communication device, comprising:

connecting a bi-directional Internet Protocol (IP) communication device to a network, said device having a unique device identifier that is associated at a server with a unique user prior to connection;

broadcasting a request for basic configuration details for the IP communication device over the network to the server, where said request contains the unique device identifier;

receiving said basic configuration details from the server, where said basic configuration details for the IP communication device are assigned to

said unique user based on said unique device identifier; and
configuring said IP communication device with said basic configuration details.

23. (New) The method of claim 22, wherein a configuration table listing device identifiers, their associated users, and each user's basic configuration details is stored in the server.

24. (New) The method of claim 22, wherein said basic configuration details for the IP communication device include an IP address.

25. (New)The method of claim 22, further comprising, before said broadcasting step, the step of automatically detecting a dial-tone for the internet protocol.

26. (New) A method for the automatic configuration of a bi-directional Internet Protocol (IP) communication device, comprising:
providing a bi-directional Internet Protocol (IP) communication device having a unique device identifier;
associating the device identifier with a user identifier for a unique user of the IP communication device;
providing the IP communication device to the unique user;
providing the device identifier and the user identifier to an internet service provider (ISP);
generating a configuration table listing device identifiers, their associated users, and each user's basic configuration details;
storing the configuration table in a server;
connecting the IP communication device to a network at a user site;
broadcasting a request for basic configuration details for the IP communication device to the server over the network, where said request contains the unique device identifier;
identifying the user's basic configuration details in the configuration table from the device identifier;
transmitting the basic configuration details to the user site IP communications device;
receiving said basic configuration details from the server; and
configuring said IP communication device with said basic configuration details.

27. (New)The method of claim 26, further comprising, before said broadcasting step, the step of automatically detecting a dial-tone for the internet protocol.